

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7190

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 00803

DEPT PASS USIA

E.O. 11652: GDR

TAGS: PINT, UK

SUBJECT: TIMES ALLEGES CIA PRESENCE IN UK INCREASED
AS RESULT OF CRISIS

1. TIMES TODAY (JAN. 18) CARRIES FRONT PAGE STORY WITH HEADLINE "CIA MEN IN BRITAIN CHECKING ON SUBVERSION", UNDER BYLINE OF CHRISTOPHER WALKER. WALKER ASSERTS THAT AMERICAN FEARS ABOUT THE CRISIS IN BRITAIN AND THE INCREASE OF ARAB TERRORISM HAVE LED TO A SHARP RISE DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS IN THE NUMBER (30-40) CIA PEOPLE IN BRITAIN. MILES COPELAND IS QUOTED IN ARTICLE AS SAYING THAT TOP MEN IN CIA BELIEVE THAT THE PRESENT SPATE OF STRIKES IN UK HAS FAR MORE SINISTER MOTIVES THAN PAY RISES. THEY (CIA) BELIEVE THAT THE AIM IS TO BRING ABOUT A SITUATION WHERE IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE. COPELAND IS REPORTED TO HAVE SUGGESTED THAT CIA HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED BY BRITISH AUTHORITIES TO CONDUCT SURVEILLANCE OF TERRORISTS AND SUBVERSIVES.

2. FOREIGN OFFICE INFORMS US THAT PRIME MINISTER WAS
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DISTRESSED BY ARTICLE AND ASKED CABINET SECRETARY SIR

JOHN HUNT TO REQUEST THAT EMBASSY ISSUE DENIAL. WE HAVE INFORMED FCO THAT EMBASSY HAD EARLIER THIS MORNING PREPARED STATEMENT WHICH EMBASSY SPOKESMAN HAS BEEN USING TO REPUDIATE STORY. FCO GRATIFIED THAT WE HAD DONE THIS AND STATED THAT AT NOON PRESS BRIEFING FCO SPOKESMAN WOULD STATE THAT "WE ARE CONFIDENT THERE IS NO TRUTH IN ALLEGATIONS IN THIS REPORT."

3. EMBASSY STATEMENT READS AS FOLLOWS: "AS A GENERAL POLICY, THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY DOES NOT COMMENT ON NEWS ARTICLES DEALING WITH INTELLIGENCE MATTERS. THE STORY IN TODAY'S TIMES, HOWEVER, IS SO OUTSIDE THE AREA OF TRUTH THAT IT MUST BE DENIED CATEGORICALLY. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TRUTH IN THE ALLEGATION THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INFLUX OF AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE MEN INTO BRITAIN IN RECENT WEEKS OR MONTHS. FURTHERMORE, THERE ARE NO AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE AGENTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM GATHERING INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE BRITISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT."

4. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS PRESS QUERIES WHICH HAVE BEEN ANSWERED BY FOREGOING PREPARED STATEMENT.

5. FULLER SUMMARY OF TIMES STORY FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.

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